

CHILDREN & DISASTERS NEWSLETTER



FEMA



March 2017

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Don't Forget: Apply for FEMA's Youth Preparedness Council



Time is running out! Applications for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) [Youth Preparedness Council](#) (YPC) close on March 31.

Youth across the Nation have the opportunity to make a difference and transform the resilience and preparedness of their communities and beyond. Students in 8th–11th grades who have engaged in community service or are interested in emergency preparedness are encouraged to apply.

Are you an adult working with youth or emergency management? Share [the application](#) with youth who might be interested in applying. Applicants must submit a completed application form, two letters of recommendation, and academic records.

[Applications](#) are due no later than March 31, 2017.

FROM THE FIELD

Wisconsin Elementary Schools STEP Into Prep

Thanks to \$20,000 in donations from AT&T and the Wisconsin Wireless Association, the [Student Tools for Emergency Planning](#) (STEP) program is returning to Wisconsin classrooms. The STEP curriculum teaches 4th and 5th grade students how to prepare for various emergencies and disasters, put together an emergency kit, and develop an emergency plan.

Lieutenant Governor Rebecca Kleefisch and Major General Don Dunbar, Adjutant General and Wisconsin's Homeland Security Advisor, [announced the return of the program](#) at an event at Waubesa Intermediate School in McFarland, WI.

“Getting students excited about emergency preparedness is the goal of the STEP program,” said Dunbar. “Students bring emergency preparedness information that they learned in the classroom back home. They are able to encourage their parents, siblings, and friends to put together their own family disaster plan and disaster kits to help them be better prepared for emergencies.”



Dunbar and Kleefisch announce the STEP program's return to Wisconsin classrooms.

Wisconsin was the first state in the Midwest to adopt the STEP program. More than 40,000 students have participated in STEP since the 2010–2011 school year. This year, another 12,000 students from 160 schools are expected to participate.

“Emergencies and disasters can happen at any time to anyone, and that’s why we think it’s important to prepare our students, said Sue Murphy, Waubesa Intermediate School Principal. “We’re excited to participate in the STEP program and help give our students the confidence and potentially lifesaving tools they need to respond in an emergency situation.”

To learn more about [Wisconsin's STEP program](#), contact Tod Pritchard at tod.pritchard@wisconsin.gov. For free STEP program print materials, reach out to fema-youth-preparedness@fema.dhs.gov.

YOUTH SPOTLIGHT

Practice Makes Perfect for Elementary School Students



James Hirsch shows local elementary students key steps to preparedness.

James Hirsch, a Region 7 member of FEMA's YPC, wanted to learn if practice helps people prepare for emergencies like it does for a test or in sports. He decided to teach elementary students in Kansas City, MO, about preparedness. He first engaged teachers at two schools in his area—Kellybrook and Shoal Creek Elementary School—to administer a pre-test. The results helped him gauge the students' existing knowledge about how to prepare for emergencies.

Next, James used [Save the Children's](#) Prep Rally materials to present preparedness basics to nearly 600 students.

“We had a lot of fun at the Prep Rally,” James said. “We worked on packets that had items like ID cards, home evacuation plans, and preparedness checklists.”

After each presentation, he gave students a post-test to see how much the students learned. The results show student growth in the subject area by as much as 14 percent.

“Now we know that practice not only helps you improve test scores and win games, but it can also help you prepare for weather and natural disasters,” James added.

Learn more about the [Prep Rally](#) model and [James' project](#).

Medical Training Experience Engages Connecticut Teens

Brookfield High School (BHS) students in Connecticut recently learned what it's like to work and volunteer in the medical field during a presentation organized by Ahjeetha Shankar, a Region 1 member of FEMA's YPC. She invited Josh Morrisette, a teen Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) and BHS senior, to explain why he became an EMT and how it has inspired him to become a physician.



Josh Morrisette shares his experiences as a Teen EMT with local high school students.

"We get around 2,500 9-1-1 calls a year, and a majority of those are about elderly patients and non-critical cases," Josh reported. "When someone is in need and makes that call, my partners and I are there to help. I'm grateful for the opportunity to help my community in these times of need."

"An emergency doesn't announce itself beforehand; it's sudden and requires many people to provide help. I'm not only talking about adults—teenagers also have the ability to save lives," Ahjeetha said. "Just looking at the work Josh does as an EMT, I feel encouraged in our ability to make a difference."

Ahjeetha plans to hold CPR trainings at her school with the help of American Red Cross volunteers, and hopes that Josh's presentation inspires more students to get involved. With the help of her [HOSA-Future Health Professionals](#) club, she's also organizing mental health trainings for BHS students.

"There is value in training teens in CPR and mental health," Ahjeetha added. "If there's no adult on the scene, but there is a properly-trained teen, they can take the matter into their own hands and administer the help themselves. That way, the world can see a much safer, more prepared tomorrow."

To learn more about Ahjeetha's ongoing projects, check out the YPC [website](#).

RESOURCES

Staying Healthy During an Emergency

Organization: Department of Health and Human Services

Website: <https://www.phe.gov/Preparedness/planning/authority/nhss/guides/Pages/youth.aspx>

Audience: All ages

Topics: Health, Medical

Description: These resources provide information and activities that young people can use to help keep themselves and the people around them healthy during an emergency.

Activities to Help Kids Prepare

Organization: Get Ready, an initiative of the American Public Health Association

Audience: Children

Topics: General preparedness, Health, Medical

Description: These activity books and games provide fun and engaging ways for children to learn more about protecting themselves.

- [Pepper the Prepper Cat Coloring Book](#)
- [Get Ready Kids Fun Pack](#)
- [Get Ready Games Guide](#)
- [Why Emergency Supplies Are Important: Anita's Story](#)

Mickey & Friends Disaster Preparedness Activity Book

Organization: The American Red Cross and Disney

Audience: Children

Topics: Earthquakes, Floods, General preparedness, Hurricanes, Lightning, Tornadoes, Winter weather

Description: This activity book features Disney characters, interactive games, and activities to teach kids interesting facts about disasters, as well as tips on how to get prepared and feel safer as a result.

- [Mickey and Friends Activity Book](#) (English Version)
- [Mickey and Friends Activity Book](#) (Spanish Version)

Teen Service and Leadership Programs

Organization: Camp Fire

Website: <http://campfire.org/programs/teens-service-and-leadership>

Audience: Teens

Topics: Health, General preparedness, Medical, Recovery, Volunteerism/Community service

Description: These programs provide a variety of opportunities that enable teens to develop as effective and engaged citizens. This includes the Teens in Action program, which helps teens learn to identify community needs, issues, or challenges; decide what issues they want to advocate for; and then take action to make a difference in their communities.

CONTACT US

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